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A method of establishing and operating child-care and/or early education centres

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ABSTRACT

A method of establishing and operating child care and/or early education centres, including:

selecting a group or an institution owning parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land having thereon facilities for education and/or the practice of religion;

selecting a plurality of said parcels of land on which it is desirable to establish child care and/or early education centres;

obtaining rights from the group or institution to construct buildings on said selected parcels of land and establish and operate child care and/or early education centres in and around the buildings constructed pursuant to said rights obtained for a specified period;

constructing buildings on said selected parcels of land and establishing child care and/or early education centres in said buildings; and

operating said child care and/or early education centres for at least a portion of said specified period.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
Patents Act 1990

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION FOR A STANDARD PATENT



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Invention Title:

**"A METHOD OF ESTABLISHING AND
OPERATING CHILD-CARE AND/OR
EARLY EDUCATION CENTRES"**

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to us:

A METHOD OF ESTABLISHING AND OPERATING CHILD CARE AND/OR EARLY
EDUCATION CENTRES

THIS INVENTION relates to a method of establishing and operating childcare and/or early education centres.

Childcare centres are now common place in Australia. Typically, they are run as "stand alone" operations and are located in residential areas in purpose designed buildings. Although a number of childcare centres may be owned by a single entity and follow the same mode of operation, for example franchised centres, they generally do not form part of a wider community facility. One significant drawback is that they do not necessarily start a child on a path through any particular line of educational institutions, or in other words they are not sufficiently affiliated with primary schools, high schools and colleges in such a manner that children attending a particular childcare centre can be assured of a place in a particular educational facility, nor be accustomed to the manner and style of teaching at the higher level facility and the staff and students in that facility.

Understandably, different expertise is required to successfully run childcare centres, preschool centres, primary schools, high schools and colleges. Thus, while some institutions, for example, various churches, operate schools or church facilities in many locations, they are not well equipped to provide and operate childcare facilities.

The present invention aims to provide a method of establishing and/or operating childcare centres which ameliorates at least one of the aforementioned problems or at least provides a useful alternative to existing methods.

With the foregoing in view the present invention resides broadly in a method of establishing and operating child care and/or early education centres, including:

selecting a group or an institution owning parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of

land having thereon facilities for education and/or the practice of religion;

selecting a plurality of said parcels of land on which it is desirable to establish child care and/or early education centres;

5 obtaining rights from the group or institution to construct buildings on said selected parcels of land and establish and operate child care and/or early education centres in and around the buildings constructed pursuant to said rights obtained for a specified period;

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constructing buildings on said selected parcels of land and establishing child care and/or early education centres in said buildings; and

operating said child care and/or early education centres for at least a portion of said specified period.

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Preferably, said rights obtained include the right to operate the child care and/or early education centres for a specified period, for example 50 years, and the group or institution is remunerated in a suitable manner for the use of the parcels of land, for example by a share of income of the child care or early education centres. Various groups exist which own or control parcels of land which are suitable for the present method, for example, various churches, particularly the Catholic and Anglican churches, and government institutions in each state of Australia. Suitably, many of those parcels are located in excellent positions for the present invention and are underutilised.

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Preferably, the method includes ascertaining the desirability of establishing child care and/or early education centres on some of said parcels of land prior to selecting said plurality of parcels. In ascertaining such desirability, various parameters may be considered from a community perspective and an economic perspective or other relevant perspective.

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Preferably, the method includes obtaining at least some of the funding for the construction of the buildings from the group

or institution. In a preferred form of the invention the funding is arranged as a loan from the group or institution to an operating entity and the loan is amortised over the term of the operating rights obtained.

In another aspect the invention resides broadly in a method of operating child care and or early education centres on parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land being owned or controlled by a group or an institution and having thereon facilities for education, including:

agreeing with the group or institution to accept children from each child care and/or early education centre into the education facilities on the respective parcels of land;

agreeing with the group or institution to accept into the child care and/or early education centre children who have one or more siblings in the education facilities on the respective parcels of land; and

providing a means of interaction between children attending the childcare or early education centres and siblings of at least some of those children attending the education facilities for a predetermined period each week whereby children attending the childcare or early education centres may become familiar with at least some of the children attending the education facilities on the respective parcels of land. Advantageously, the mixing of children in this manner is believed to reduce the likelihood of children feeling isolated in a large group of older children, particularly those who do not have siblings. That is to say, the advantages of having siblings is shared among all the children in the centre. Additionally, some certainty of a path through the education facility is provided for whole families from childcare stage through to the stage of entry into university. Further, it is believed that such interaction between children will result in increased interaction between parents of children at different stages thus creating more cohesion between all parents to the benefit of the childcare or early education centres and the

education facilities. In the case of the parcels of land being owned by a church organisation, the better cohesion may flow through to better cohesion in the parish, with improved attendance at fetes, concerts, sporting fixtures and the like with the resulting mixing of children of all ages.

5 In yet another aspect the invention resides broadly in a method of operating child care and or early education centres on parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land being owned or controlled by a group or an institution and having thereon facilities for education, including:

linking education programs in the childcare centres with educational programs in the education facilities, and

providing a means of interaction between children attending the education facilities and children attending the child care or early education facilities on the respective parcels of land.

Preferably, the education programs are linked by the attendance of a teacher from the education facility upon the childcare or early education centre for a specified period each week and the giving of instruction to the children by the teacher, the teacher being the intended teacher or one of the intended teachers for the first year of the children in the education facility. Advantageously, such attendance is believed to reduce the trauma of change from the childcare or early education centre to the education facility.

25 In still yet another aspect the present invention resides broadly in a method of establishing and operating child care and/or early education centres, including:

selecting a group or an institution owning parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land having thereon facilities for education and/or the practice of religion;

selecting a plurality of said parcels of land on which it is desirable to establish child care and/or early education centres;

obtaining rights from the group or institution to construct buildings on said selected parcels of land and establish and operate child care and/or early education centres in and around the buildings to be constructed pursuant to said rights obtained for a specified period;

5 constructing buildings on said selected parcels of land and establishing child care and/or early education centres in and around said buildings;

the rights obtained including the right of entry of children from the child care and/or early education centres into the education facilities on the respective parcels of land and the right for the childcare or early education centres to have access to children in the respective education facilities who have siblings attending the childcare or early education centres to interact with the children in the respective childcare or early education centres for a predetermined period each school week, and the right to obtain information regarding the education programs being followed in the education facilities and the right to link the education programs in the respective childcare centres with those programs, including the right to have a teacher from the respective education facilities attend upon the childcare or early education centre for a specified period each school week to give instruction to the children, the teacher being the intended teacher or one of the intended teachers for the first year of the children in the respective education facilities.

25 In order that the invention may be more readily understood and put into practical effect, the invention will now be described with reference to an example in which the institution chosen is the Catholic Church but it will be appreciated that the method can be applied in the same manner if the Anglican Church is chosen.

30 In many cases the parcels of land owned by the Catholic Church are under-utilised. For example, a parcel of land may have thereon only a primary school or a church building and/or a hall

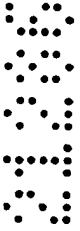
or a primary school but be located in a well established residential area. In some cases the primary school may be in close proximity to a church building and/or a church high school. The present invention provides for considering all or some of the parcels of land owned by the Catholic Church in this case to
5 determine their suitability for the establishment thereon of a child care or early education facility and the desirability of having such a facility in that location. Parameters to be considered may include area of the land, availability of space, surrounding population density, surrounding population mix,
10 economic standing of the surrounding population, proximity of the location to parental work locations, existing education facilities on the parcel of land or proximity to church education facilities, and various other factors.

Once a plurality of suitable parcels has been selected,
15 rights to construct and operate child care and/or early education facilities on the parcels of land are obtained from the Catholic Church. Subsequently, suitable buildings are constructed and the proposed facilities are established. Typically, the rights to construct and operate the facilities entails remunerating the Catholic church by way of a share of the income generated by the
20 facilities.

Further, the operation of the facility includes reaching an agreement with the catholic Church that children from the facility will be accepted into a church primary school on the
25 respective parcels of land and into a secondary school as well as a church university if available and that siblings of children enrolled in the primary school or secondary school on the respective parcels of land or proximal thereto will be accepted into the child care or early education facilities as the case may
30 be.

The foregoing description has been given by way of illustrative example of the invention, and many modifications and variations which will be apparent to persons skilled in the art may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the

invention as defined in the appended claims.



THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A method of establishing and operating child care and/or early education centres, including:

5 selecting a group or an institution owning parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land having thereon facilities for education and/or the practice of religion;

10 selecting a plurality of said parcels of land on which it is desirable to establish child care and/or early education centres;

15 obtaining rights from the group or institution to construct buildings on said selected parcels of land and establish and operate child care and/or early education centres in and around the buildings constructed pursuant to said rights obtained for a specified period;

20 constructing buildings on said selected parcels of land and establishing child care and/or early education centres in said buildings; and

25 operating said child care and/or early education centres for at least a portion of said specified period.

2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein said rights obtained include the right to operate the child care and/or early education centres for a specified period, and the group or institution is remunerated by a share of income of the child care or early education centres.

3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the method includes ascertaining the desirability of establishing child care and/or early education centres on some of said parcels of land prior to selecting said plurality of parcels.

4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the group or institution is the Catholic Church or the

Anglican Church.

5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, including obtaining at least some of the funding for the construction of the buildings from the group or institution.

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6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein the funding is arranged as a loan from the group or institution to an operating entity.

7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the loan is amortised over the term of the operating rights obtained.

8. A method of operating child care and or early education centres on parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land being owned or controlled by a group or an institution and having thereon facilities for education, including:

agreeing with the group or institution to accept children from each child care and/or early education centre into the education facilities on the respective parcels of land;

agreeing with the group or institution to accept into the child care and/or early education centre children who have one or more siblings in the education facilities on the respective parcels of land; and

providing a means of interaction between children attending the childcare or early education centres and siblings of at least some of those children attending the education facilities for a predetermined period each week whereby children attending the childcare or early education centres may become familiar with at least some of the children attending the education facilities on the respective parcels of land.

9. A method of operating child care and or early education centres on parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout

a city, said parcels of land being owned or controlled by a group or an institution and having thereon facilities for education, including:

linking education programs in the childcare centres with educational programs in the education facilities, and

5 providing a means of interaction between children attending the education facilities and children attending the child care or early education facilities on the respective parcels of land.

10 10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein the education programs are linked by the attendance of a teacher from the education facility upon the childcare or early education centre for a specified period each school week and the giving of instruction to the children by the teacher, the teacher being the intended teacher or one of the intended teachers for the first
15 year of the children in the education facility.

20 11. A method of establishing and operating child care and/or early education centres, including:

25 selecting a group or an institution owning parcels of land in a plurality of locations throughout a city, said parcels of land having thereon facilities for education and/or the practice of religion;

30 selecting a plurality of said parcels of land on which it is desirable to establish child care and/or early education centres;

obtaining rights from the group or institution to construct buildings on said selected parcels of land and establish and operate child care and/or early education centres in and around the buildings to be constructed pursuant to said rights obtained
for a specified period;

constructing buildings on said selected parcels of land and establishing child care and/or early education centres in and around said buildings;

the rights obtained including the right of entry of children

from the child care and/or early education centres into the education facilities on the respective parcels of land and the right for the childcare or early education centres to have access to children in the respective education facilities who have siblings attending the childcare or early education centres to interact with the children in the respective childcare or early education centres for a predetermined period each school week, and the right to obtain information regarding the education programs being followed in the education facilities and the right to link the education programs in the respective childcare centres with those programs, including the right to have a teacher from the respective education facilities attend upon the childcare or early education centre for a specified period each school week to give instruction to the children, the teacher being the intended teacher or one of the intended teachers for the first year of the children in the respective education facilities.

12. A method according to Claim 1 as hereinbefore described.

13. A method according to Claim 8 as hereinbefore described.

14. A method according to Claim 9 as hereinbefore described.

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Dated this 6th day of March, 2002

DE PASQUALE BROS PTY LTD

By its Patent Attorneys

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